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ABSTRACT

These learning modules are part of a series of instructional materials designed for use by trainers working with vocational middle-level managers interested in improving their managerial skills. Addressed in the individual modules are the following topics: conducting problem-solving meetings, expanding creativity, and team building. Each module contains a module overview, a primary goal, sub-goals with accompanying unit objectives and suggested activities, related materials and resources, and a bibliography. Included among the types of instructional materials provided in the modules are lists of tasks that must be mastered in order to execute the managerial practice under examination, guidelines for completing the individual tasks, lectures, transparency masters, and an evaluation instrument. (MN)

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

PHASE III

PRODUCED BY

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT CENTER - CENTRAL'S

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DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

PHASE III

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INTRODUCTION

In 1979, the N.J. Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation, as part of its commitment to professional growth, produced a series of 10 instructional modules designed to be used by trainers working with vocational school middle level managers interested in improving managerial skills. The response to the first ten modules indicated that they met a real need so 4 additional modules were added in 1981 and a final set of 3 in 1982.

This third segment of the Vocational Education Management Training Program deals with the topics of Conducting Problem Solving Meetings, Expanding Creativity and Team Building. These topics were selected to help administrators gain the skills needed in a world of new problems and changing demands.

Staff members are calling for a greater hand in decision making and policy development. Administrators who were used to having a relatively free hand in many areas are uncomfortable with working with groups for such purposes. Traditional leadership models, under which most current managers were trained, do not always fit the needs of today's schools. Many problems that were dealt with easily in earlier times do not respond to the same treatment today. New and creative ideas are required.

As in the two earlier phases of this project, the modules are designed to be structural aids or curriculum guides that a trainer can use to run training sessions. The term train is used purposefully since the focus is on skill development rather than simply adding to cognitive knowledge. Activities are participatory and experiential rather than passive lecture. Since these topics are relatively new, bibliographies are included for each one. It is important for anyone who will be working with these modules to keep up with the research and literature in the field.

If you do not have the first fourteen modules you may borrow copies from the N.J. Occupational/Consumer Resource Center (E.I.C./C's Edison Program) (201-985-7769). Training in using the modules and conducting workshops is also available upon request. If you wish the names of qualified trainers please let us know because there are practicing administrators who wish to share their skill and experience.

Good Luck!

Conducting Problem Solving Meetings

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Module Overview

Title CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

Goal: To train participants to run problem solving meetings

Sub-goal(s):
A. Understand different types of meetings
B. Identify appropriate meeting behaviors
C. Understand steps in problem solving
D. Gain problem solving skills
E. Learn how to evaluate meetings

Technique(s): Discussion, lecture, simulation, structured experiences

Size of Group: 5-25

Number and Length of Sessions: 6 sessions - 2hrs. ea.
2 sessions - 6hrs. ea.

Setting: Conference room with work tables

Time Analysis

Subgoals	Estimated Time Required
A	1 hr
B	1 hr
C	2 hr
D	6 hr
E	2 hrs

CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

OVERVIEW

Many times you are called to a meeting for the announced purpose of sharing in a problem solving experience. You get there and find out that all you do is listen to a decision already made and are expected to just agree. This doesn't always mean that the person who called it meant it that way, it just happened. Running a problem solving meeting is not the same as running other types of meetings. It calls for specific skills that not everyone has.

Today anyone responsible for results that require working with others knows that everyone wants to be in on the decision making. If they didn't participate they don't feel responsible. The business world is learning that traditional authoritarian decision making does not result in high productivity. Japanese workers who are part of the decision making process are producing at high levels of productivity. Vocational and other schools are finding out that their staffs are learning from industry and their own frustrations to demand a role in decision making that affects their lives.

Are you, as a responsible administrator, ready? Do you have the skills needed to bring your staff together and get them to share in making key decisions and them be willing to support the conclusion afterward?

This module is designed to train Vocational Education administrators to conduct problem solving meetings. It will introduce participants to the steps of problem solving, the behaviors that contribute to effective meetings and methods of involving others in decision making.

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEETINGS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to describe various purposes for meetings.	1.a Define a meeting as an event two or more people come together. 1.b Elicit a list of reasons why people would come togethers for a meeting. - Share/transmit information - Socialize - Solve problems - Get instructions 1.c Ask participants to give examples of each type of meeting from within their work setting. 1.d Summarize and point out that often one meeting will include more than one purpose.
2. Participants will be able to describe the format and characteristics of each.	2.a Elicit from the group ideas about similarities and differences between various meeting types. include: - appropriate size - amount of trust required - structure - need for agendas - skill required - need for preparation - role of leader

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEETINGS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
(cont.)	
3. Participants will be able to identify characteristics of effective problem solving meetings	3.a Using criteria from 2a above, discuss with group how they apply to problem solving meetings. - Size - 5-8 - Trust level - high - Structure - process oriented - Agendas - worded as outcomes - Skills - task and maintainance - Preparation - data and process plan - Leader role - facilitator 3.b Distribute copies of Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2 as examples of a process oriented structure and discuss.

Materials and Resources —

Encouraging Participation and Feelings of Involvement:
Guidlines for Chief Executive Officers (Enhibit 1)
Guidlines for Leading Problem Solving Meetings (Exhibit 2)

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE MEETING BEHAVIORS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to describe the different types of behavior appropriate to each type of meeting.	1.a Elicit from the group their perception of how one should behave at each type of meeting. 1.b Conduct a discussion on: --Different skills --Levels of trust required --Cognitive skills --Social skills --Role of agendas --Switching behaviors as purpose changes.
2. Participants will be able to list the skills needed for effective problem solving meetings.	2.a Elicit from the group a list of skills they feel are needed in a problem solving meeting. Be sure to include: --Building agendas --Involving others --Decision making skills --Taking minutes 2.b Group skills as either task or maintainance oriented. --Task - having to do with reaching desired outcomes. --Maintainance - having to do with keeping the group together regardless of task.
3. Participants will be able to list and describe task and maintainance skills.	3.a Distribute list of task and maintainance skills (EXHIBIT 3) 3.b Review with group in your own words.

Materials and Resources —

TASK AND MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS (EXHIBIT 3)

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TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE MEETING BEHAVIORS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
(3. cont.)	3.c Elicit from group examples of each type of behavior from their experiences. 3.d Role play selected skills in small groups. 3.e Have group members list and define behaviors in their own words.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND STEPS IN PROBLEM SOLVING

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to explain problem solving as a step by step process.	1.a Make a presentation and include: --It is often haphazzard --It is often poor --it can be rational --When it is logical it is more likely to be good (EXHIBIT 4) 1.b Elicit examples of good and bad problem solving experiences. 1.c Analyze good ones and try to draw conclusions that such experiences were probably due to the fact that there was a plan to the process. 1.d Elicit from the group possible steps to problem solving and put on newsprint or chalkboard. 1.e Summarize steps.
2. Participants will be able to explain steps in problem solving process.	2.a Make a presentation on process for one person and group. (EXHIBIT 5) 2.b Conduct discussion on steps. 2.c Summarize steps.

Materials and Resources —

Lecturette on Problem Sovling as process (Exhibit 4)
Lecturette on Problem Sovling alone and in Groups (Exhibit 5)

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS GAIN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to describe 2 methods of encouraging acceptance of a problem.	1.a Suggest the following strategies: --Ask group members to answer question "What effect will solving the problem have on you or your job?" or "what effect will not solving it have?" --Ask group members to describe how they see the issue or would describe the problem. --Ask group members to explain how the issue relates to their personal goals or priorities. 1.b Divide group into subgroups of 4 or 5 and ask them to role play acceptance strategies, using a problem from their experience as a sample. 1.c If there is some reluctance leader should role play with a subgroup first, then have participants do it.
2. Participants will be able to describe 2 methods of analyzing a problem situation.	2.a Suggest the following methods: --Raise the basic Who, What, When, Why, Where and How questions about the issue. --List all each person knows about the problem. --Draw a picture or model of the problem as each person sees it. --Develop a matrix with the attributes of the problem on each axis and see how each relates to each. 2.b Have each subgroup try one of the methods.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS GAIN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
(2 cont.)	2.c Have each group report to the others on their reaction to the methods used.
3. Participants will be able to describe 2 methods of getting a group to define a problem to its collective satisfaction.	3.a Suggest the following ideas: --Ask as many questions beginning with 'why' as possible until all agree on one formulation. --Identify key words in the current phrasing and analyze each until group agrees on language of statement. --List as many sub-problems as possible and then combine them into one that all can accept. --Prepare a list of what it is and what it is not until consensus is reached. 3.b Form subgroups and each one role play one method of definition. 3.c Elicit and share reactions.
4. Participants will be able to describe 2 mthods of generating alternative solutions.	4.a Review the rules of brainstorming: --Quantity of ideas --No critisism --No questions/comments --Passing allowed --Building on previous ideas encouraged --Give time to think --Encourage creative responses and unconventional suggestions.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS GAIN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
(cont.)	4.b Suggest following methods: --List attributes and modify each one separately --Look at issue from perspective of stranger or person from other speciality. --Select item at random and try to imagine how is issue is like that item. 4.c Have subgroups try out various methods. 4.d Share reactions.
5. Participants will be able to list 2 strategies for selecting a solution.	5.a Suggest the following: --Assign points to each choice so that the total is 100. If 40 points are given to one option and 20 to another it means one is valued twice as much. Average the ratings and discuss. --Rank order the alternatives. --Have each person select 4 or 5 depending on total number and tally the votes. This will shrink the list. --List criteria of success and compare each option ot each criteria. The option that meets most criteria is chosen. 5.b Have sub-groups try various methods.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS GAIN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS?

Objectives	Suggested Activities
(5 cont.)	5.c Share reactions.
6. Participants will be able to list 2 strategies for encouraging implementation of agreed upon outcomes.	6.a Suggest the following: --Develop chart of duties and time lines. --Design a model of how it will get done. --Make it a team task. --Hire/appoint project manager
	6.b Have sub-groups try various methods.
	6.c Share reactions.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE CONDUCTING PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS LEARN HOW TO EVALUATE MEETINGS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to explain why it is important to evaluate meetings.	1.a Elicit from the group stories concerning postmeeting conversations they experienced after meetins they have attended in the past. 1.b Post on board or newsprint 1.c Summarize by asking them to list feelings about such conversations. - Helped relieve tension - Complained about behavior of some members - Expressed good feelings about accomplishments. - Made suggestions for how it could have been done better.
2. Participants will be able to describe 3 ways of evaluating problem solving meetings.	2.a Review the following strategies: - Save last 5-10 minutes of each metting to have open discussion of meeting process. - Distribute and discuss "Analysis of Meetings" (EXHIBIT 6) - Distribute and discuss "Problem Solving Meetings" (EXHIBIT 7)

Materials and Resources —

Analysis of Meetings Exhibit - 6
Problem Solving Meetings Exhibit - 7

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ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION

AND

FEELINGS OF INVOLVEMENT

GUIDELINES FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVES

It is natural for top executives to have greater insight into the requirements of the organization and its needs, since they see the whole picture and have to deal with the top policy making body. Therefore, it is natural for top level executives to assume that they must make all the decisions since they are ultimately responsible for all that happens in the organization. Yet, at the same time, chief executives must have staff members with particular skills and expertise in selected areas, since on one person can be expected to have all the knowledge or skill needed to perform all the jobs of a complex organization or the time to implement all the decisions made. The conflict between being the person with the final responsibility and having to depend on others for specialized knowledge and implementation of decisions makes relationships with subordinate staff members an area of potential tension.

From one point of view the top executive feels compelled to 'be in charge' and tell staff members what must be done. At the same time, the chief executive needs input from the staff to insure that all pertinent information is considered. To get this input, to make the staff feel committed to the decision, and to insure that the decision is the best one for the organization as whole requires careful selection of strategies to guide the chief executive in relating to the staff. To accomplish this the chief executive officer has to be in control of the process and just set parameters for the outcome, allowing staff to work out a solution that they can own.

Following is a suggested guideline that can be helpful to a chief executive typing to generate good ideas, get the staff to participate, encourage commitment to decision yet retain ultimate authority.

GUIDLINE FOR LEADING PROBLEM-SOLVING MEETINGS

When conducting problem solving meetings concentrate on process rather than content, particularly at the beginning. This requires setting up a strategy of steps to follow in avance of the meeting and devoting onces leadership concerns to insuring that they are followed.

QUESTIONING OUTLINE

QUESTION	EXPECTED RESPONSE
1. How do you see the problem?	1.a Various formulations of the issue from different people. (by asking the question a few times the different perceptions will emerge and gradually a consensus will grow on an agreed upon statement which will provide the basis for future steps).
2. How do you define the key terms in the problem statement? (point to one at a time)	2.a A discussion of the meaning of the problem to each of the participants. (Some difference of opinion if expected and should be encouraged. Eventually agreement will be reached).
3. What are some of the forces that are operating on the problem (helping or hindering)?	3.a A listing of the forces within people, between people, and in the environment that may help solve the problem or prevent its resolution.
4. What are some of the alternatives we can consider?	4.a A list of possible solutions that can be considered. (It is important that the list, at this stage, be large. The emphasis should be on quatity and creativity, not quality or practicality. The chance to eliminate inappropriate solutions will come later).
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative?	5.a An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the options for resolving the problem
6. Which alternative is most likely to meet our criteria of success and can be supported by all of us?	6.a A solution that will be supported by you and your staff and has a good chance to solve your problem. Remember that you are part of the group and your criteria must be met and you must be able to support the group solution.

TASK AND MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

TASK FUNCTIONS:

1. Initiating: Proposing tasks or goals; defining a group a procedure for solving a problem; suggesting other ideas for consideration.

2. Information or opinion-seeking: Requesting facts on the problem; seeking relevant information; asking for suggestions and ideas.

4. Clarifying or elaborating: Interpreting or reflecting ideas or suggestions; clearing up confusion; indicating alternatives and issues before the group; giving examples.

5. Summarizing: Pulling related ideas together; restating suggestions after the group has discussed the.

6. Consensus-testing: Sending up "trial balloons" to see if the group is nearing a conclusion or agreement has been reached.

MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS:

1. Encouraging: being friendly, warm, and responsive to others; accepting others and their contributions; listening; showing regard for others by giving them opportunity or recognition.

2. Expressing group feelings: Sensing felling, mood, relationships within the group; sharing one's own feelings with other members.

3. Harmonizing: Attempting to reconcile disagreements; reducing tension through "pouring oil on troubled waters"; getting people to explore their difference.

4. Compromising: Offering to compromise one's own position ideas, or status; admitting error; disciplining oneself to help maintain the group.

5. Gate-Keeping: Seeing that others have a chance to speak; keeping the discussion a group discussion rather than a one, two, or three-way conservation.

6. Setting Standards: Expressing standards that will help group to achieve; applying standards in evaluating group functioning and production.

LECTURETTE ON PROBLEM SOLVING

AS A PROCESS

Problem solving is an activity that concerns everyone, It is usually seen as a process of guessing the right answer. It is assumed that there is a right answer to every problem and the only real concern is how to get at it. Often the solution is to look for the "expert" who "knows" it all. The reality is that most people approach problem solving as a haphazard or partially rational process of answer finding. The trouble with the approach is that the emphasis on "the" answer precludes or inhibits spending time on analyzing the issue or making sure that the problem being worked on is the real one, or that everyone sees the problem the same way. This results in most problem solving efforts ending up with poor decisions.

The alternative to solving problems from an"answer seeking" approach is to look on problem solving as a process of logical steps of analysis and synthesis. By emphasizing the process rather than the answer the solution is more likely to be a honest response to the situation as it is instead of how people think it is. Most people have a set of beliefs about life and issues that force them into trying to fit facts into theories rather than letting the reality of the situation determine the response. Someone once said that when all you have is hammer you are likely to think every problem is a nail.

Rather than use one theory of how things should be as the basis of deciding what action to take it would be better to have a method of logically looking at a situation and using that method to analyze the facts, gather relevant data and synthesize them into rational response. There is no guarantee that any method will provide a perfect response to a situation. It is just that an open, logical, process oriented, approach is more likely to produce a valid and useful response than is a either a chance guess or trying to fit all issues into a single theory.

PROBLEM SOLVING - ALONE AND IN GROUPS

WHAT IS A PROBLEM?

A problem exists when there is a difference between the way things are and the way someone wants them to be. Before a problem can be solved some questions have to be answered. Who has the problem? How does that person see the current situation? How does that person want things to be?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ONE PERSON WITH A PROBLEM AND A GROUP GROUP WITH A PROBLEM?

None, if they all agree on the answers to the three questions listed above. A lot, if they don't. While the steps involved in solving a problem are the same with one, two or more persons, the issue and skills of communication become critical when there is more than one. In a situation where one person has a problem, a family member or a friend(sometimes that is the same person) can help by "active Listening" and making sure that all the right steps are followed. When the problem is intensified because two or more people feel that things should be different or disagree on what has to be changed or what it should be changed into, other skills may have to be emphasized.

SOUNDS DIFFICULT - CAN PROBLEM BE SOLVED?

Usually people say that there are four ways of concluding problems. We both lose. You lose an I win. You win and I lose. We both win. In truth there are only two ways to finish, either we both lose or we both win. This occurs because, if either of us loses, we remember, and the memory has a negative influence on our relationship or our next problem. if we both win, that memory has a positive influence on our relationship and makes solving our next problem that much easier.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS?

Steps	(in groups)	Where to look
1. Accept the problem	(as all see it)	values, goals and perceptions.
2. Analyze it	(from all points of view)	feelings and facts
3. Define it	(agree)	
4. Identify Options	(as all see them)	within persons, between people, in environment
5. Choose a solution	(use everyone's values)	in terms of values goals and resources
7. Implement	(share responsibilities)	what each does best
8. Evaluate	(learn and grow together)	in terms of goals and values.

WHAT WAS THAT AGAIN?

PHASE ONE
ANALYZE THE PROBLEM

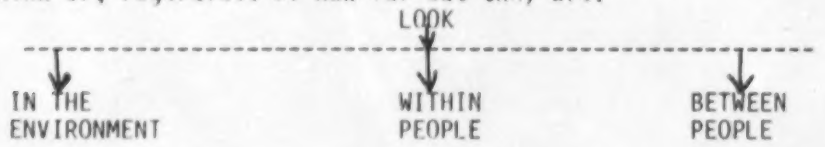
1. Make sure you (and all other participants) really thing it is a problem.

2. Write down a statement of the problem that makes sense to you (and any others involved).

3. Figure out what and who is involved in or affected by the problem.

PHASE TWO
FIND A SOLUTION

4. List all the possible solutions you (and others involved) can think of, regardless of how far out they are.



5. List your (individual and collective) goals and measures of successful resolution of the problem. Look at each option in terms of its likelihood of satisfying the important criteria (yours and everyone else's).)

6. Pick out (or agree on) what seems to be the best choice or combination of alternatives. Try to select one where everyone wins something.

PHASE THREE
TAKE ACTION

7. Follow through on your decision. Make sure that each participant in the process shares in part of the action taken.

8. Look back on what you did, sometime after you finished doing what you decided on. See if it worked the way you hoped it would. Examine the way you worked it out, as well as the result. Try to learn how to do it even better next time.

ANALYSIS OF MEETINGS

The philosopher Martin Buber once said, "All life is meeting". No matter how that statement makes you feel, you will probably agree that school systems hold a lot of meetins, and that much depends on their quality. Please think specifically of the meetings of the faculty you have in your school.

How often are these meetings usually held? _____
Length of typical meeting _____

Now, please consider what usually or typically happens in these meetings. Some possible happenings in meetings are listed below. Six numerals appear after each item; the numerals have the following meanings:

5....This is very typical of the meetings; it happens repeatedly.
4....This is fairly typical of the meeting; it happens often.
3....This is more typical than not; it happens sometimes.

2....This is more untypical than typical, though it happens now and then.
1....This is untypical; it rarely happens.
0....This is not typical at all; it never happens.

After each item below, please circle the numberal that best tells how often the thing happens that is mentioned in the item.

	Repeatedly					Never
1. The group discusses the pros and cons of several different alternate solutions to a problem.	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. People are afraid to be openly critical or make good objections.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. People hesitate to give their true feelings about problems which are discussed.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. When the group is supposedly working on a problem, it is really working on some other "under the table" problem.	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. People give their real feelings about waht is happening during the meeting itself.	5	4	3	2	1	0

PROBLEM SOLVING MEETINGS

TOPIC OF MEETINGS _____ DATE _____

To what extent does this statement describe one important factor in group problem solving?						To what extent is the factor present in our problem solving meetings?					
Low				High	Statements	Min.					Max.
1	2	3	4	5	A. The reasoning or the rationable behind the need to make this decision or solve this problem is clear	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	B. There is a clear, commonly understood statement of the problem.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	C. There is a clear, commonly understood statement of the need to meet.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	D. All participants agree on the data and information that will be needed to properly work on the problem.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	E. The needed data is available	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	F. The needed data is valid and understood.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	G. All members take an active part in group discussions.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	H. All members openly express their feelings	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	I. All members feeling disagreement express it.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	J. The expertise and insight and opinions of all members are encouraged and used.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5	K. Emphasis is placed on issues rather than on people.	1	2	3	4	5	

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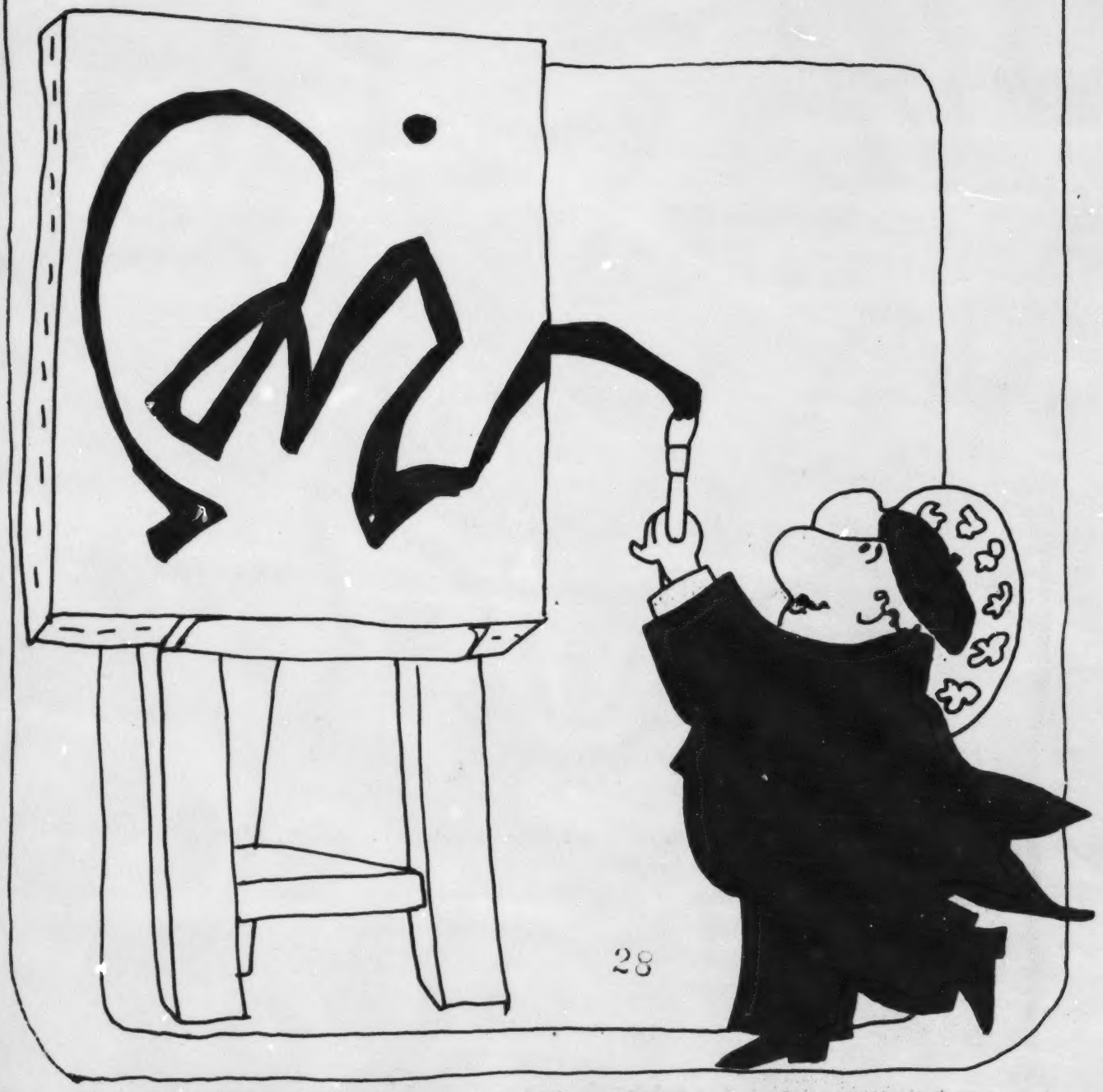
Expanding Creativity



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Module Overview

Title Expanding Creativity

Goal: To learn creative methods of looking at problems and situations

Sub-goal(s):

A. Understand creativity
B. Expand power to be creative
C. Apply creative approaches to new situations

Technique(s): Structured experiences, lecture, discussion

Size of Group: 5-20

Number and Length of Sessions: 2 sessions - 6hrs ea.
4 sessions - 2hrs ea.

Setting: Conference room with work tables

Time Analysis

Subgoals	Estimated Time Required
A	2 hr
B	6 hrs
C	4 hrs

EXPANDING CREATIVITY

As we all face the future the only aspect of it we can predict with certainty is that it will be a change from what we have today. The amount and rate of change is growing every day. To survive in the world of the future we will have to be quite creative. New ideas will have to be generated. New approaches will have to be taken. Even today, as we experience the new forces that impact on our jobs we recognize that the answers of yesterday are no longer workable. To provide the kind of leadership our schools and organizations need to survive we will have to be more creative in our thinking than we have been in the past.

Most of our leaders have been successful in operating the schools along lines that were laid down by previous administrations. In the past they were not forced to be creative, it was enough that they did what others did. However, in the recent past the world of education has changed considerably. New demands have been placed on the schools, new students with different values and needs are asking for an education, legislatures are finding new ways of making the schools accountable, the economy has had a profound effect on our staffs, and we must learn to deal with decreasing enrollment rather than growth or stability.

The challenge is find methods that will prepare our administrators and managers to be more creative in their approaches to problem solving and planning. There are many systems available to train leaders in problem solving strategies, including some in this series. This unit, however, is designed to emphasize methods for generating and encouraging creativity for its own sake. It focuses on helping managers to look at issues and problems in new ways - creative approaches to traditional matters.

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND CREATIVITY

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to define "creativity"	1a. Elicit from group what they perceive creativity to be. 1b. Post on newsprint or chalkborad. 1c. Summarize. Make sure to add, if necessary, that creativity is the ability to see facts and situations is novel and unconventional ways. 1d. As an example, divide group into teams of 3 Or 4 and ask them to each try to list 20 ways in which a brick can be used. List answers on board or newsprint. Note the more creative suggestions.
2. Participants will be able to explain value of creativity.	2a. Elicit from the group benefits of being creative. Include: - New ideas for old issues - Break new ground - Chance to see causes to difficult problems - New excitement in work - Decrease in boredom - Increased chance of outside funding. 2b. Summarize reasons.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND CREATIVITY

Objectives	Suggested Activities
3. Participants will be able to identify blocks to creativity.	3a. Lead group in discussion of such factors as: -Willingness to accept the old ways as the only way. -Refusal to identify or examine alternatives. -Unwillingness to take risks -Emphasis on solutions rather than problem -Lack of feeling of control over activities or events -Lack of acceptance by top management

Materials and Resources —

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS EXPAND THEIR POWER TO BE CREATIVE

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to recognize the need to go beyond traditional boundries.	1a. Ask participants to draw a block of 9 dots - . . . . 1b. Ask them to connect all nine with four straight lines that do not overlap (they may cross) without taking their pencil off the paper. 1c. After all have either found an answer or quit share one possible solution (EXHIBIT 1) and accept any others that meet the conditions. 1d. Since all solutions call for either going beyond the invisible border created by the "Aquare" of dots or the two dimentional nature of the paper, lead a discussion on the need to not be trapped by traditional limits to problems. 1e. Ask them to go back to the problem and see if they can find other ways to solve the problem.

Materials and Resources —

Solution to the 9 dot problem (EXHIBIT 1)
References Ackoff (1978) and Adams (1976)

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS EXPAND THEIR POWER TO BE CREATIVE

Objectives	Suggested Activities
2. Participants will be able to recognize that problems have components which can be modified.	2a. Hold up a pencil and ask participants to list each component. -color -length -thickness -eraser . shape . position . presence at all -etc. 2b. Have group members suggest alternatives to each variable. 2c. Discuss value of identifying components and modifying them as a means of improving creativity. 2d. Have participants list components of a course of study and modify each one.
3. Participants will be able to see need for looking at new relationships between problem elements.	3a. ask participants to list ways in which a rubber band is similar to a loaf of bread. 3b. Ask if the exercize changed the way any of them saw either item. Did it give them any new insight into uses of either item?

Materials and Resources —

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS EXPAND THEIR POWER TO BE CREATIVE

Objectives	Suggested Activities
3. (continued)	3c. Suggest that parent conferences may be as problem to some schools. It might help if it was seen from a different perspective. Suggest the conference is like a hot fudge sundae. Ask them to see how they are alike. 3d. When the list is long ask if any of the relationships suggest a way of improving parent conferences.

Materials and Resources —

See Prince (1970) for a whole system called "Synectics" based on forced relationships.

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TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS EXPAND THEIR POWER TO BE CREATIVE

Objectives	Suggested Activities
4. Participants will be able to see role of creativity in defining problems.	4a. Suggest the problem of playing hookey. 4b. Explain a who/what chart as as semi-structured approach to problem definition. It requires you to-- -list the issue of the middle of a blank page -divide the page horizontally -label the top half "who" and the bottom half "what" -brainstorm answers to the questions "who is involved" and "what is involved" and chart the responses in terms of their relationships to each other. (see Exhibit 2) 4c. Give group an opportunity to complete their own chart. 4d. Conduct a discussion of just what the best way of phrasing the "real" problem is. 4e. Summarize benefits of creative approaches to problem definition.

Materials and Resources —

WHO/WHAT CHART EXHIBIT # 2

TITLE EXPANDING CREATIVITY

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS TO APPLY CREATIVE APPROACHES TO NEW SITUATIONS.

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to apply creative approaches to a problem of their choice.	1a. Divide participants into small groups of 3 or 4. 1b. Have each group select a problem. 1c. Ask them to select a creative strategy to emphasize in their attack on it. 1d. Give them time to work on the issue. Accept all efforts as worthwhile. 1e. Discuss reaults and summarize reactions/ insights.
2. Participants will be able to generate a climate of acceptance of creativity.	2a. Distribute and discuss "Resistance to Change" by Watson (EXAMPLE 3) 2b. Use one or more of the creative methods covered to find a variety of ways to createde a supportive environment. 2c. Summarize.

Materials and Resources —

Resistance to Change by Goodwin Watson (EXAMPLE 3)

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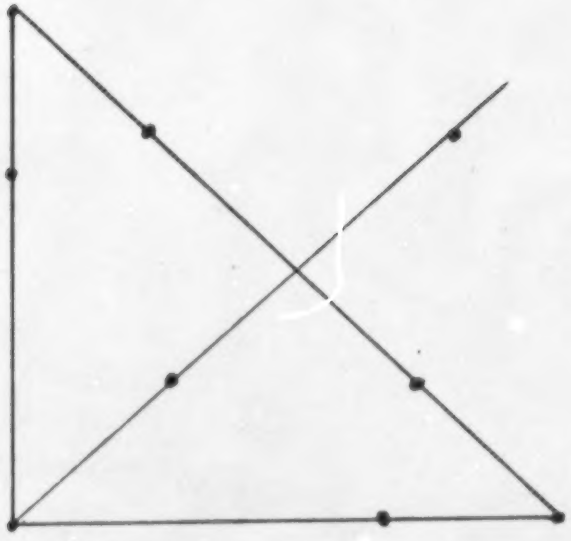
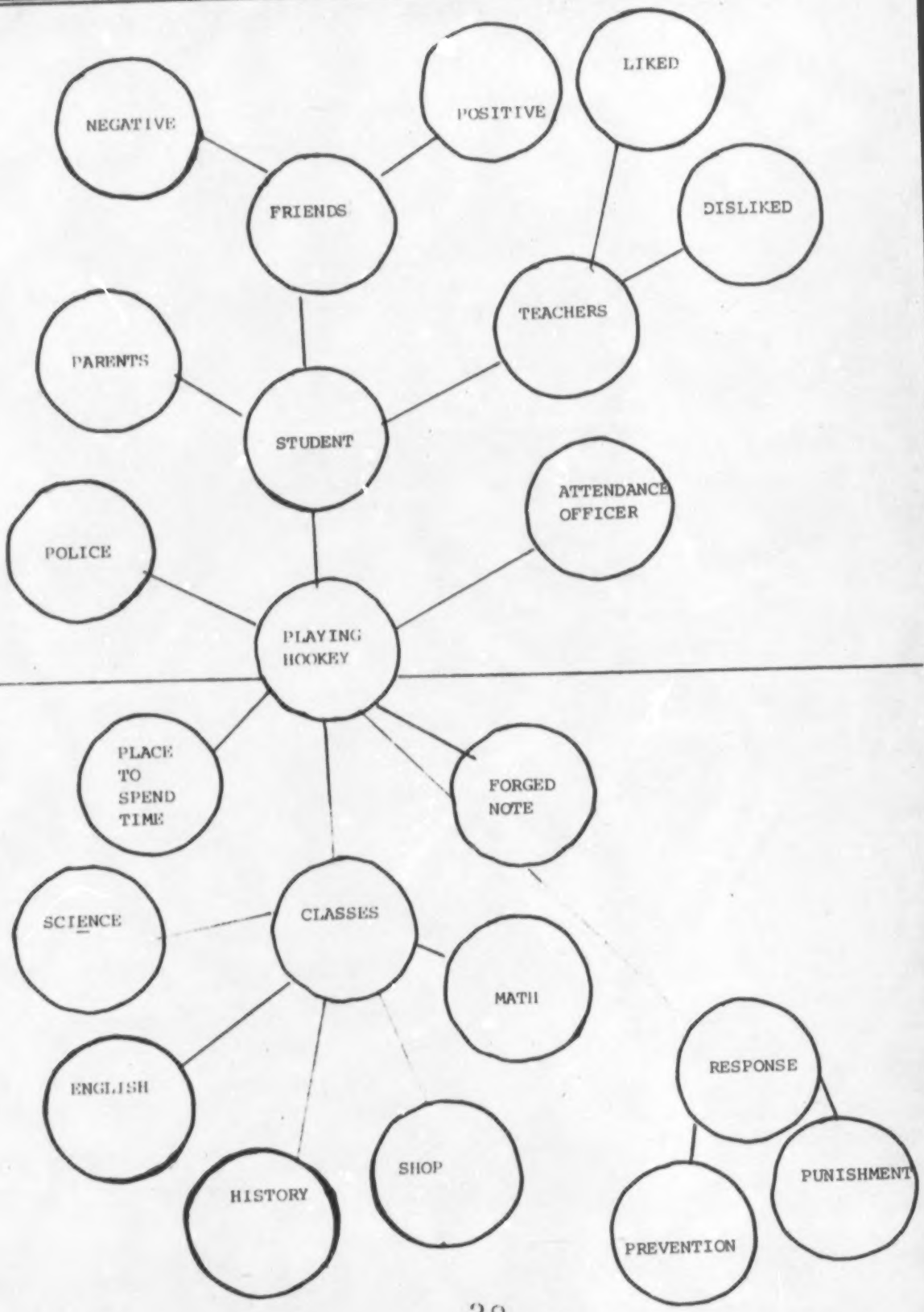
EXHIBIT 1




NEGATIVE
POSITIVE
LIKED
FRIENDS
DISLIKED
TEACHERS
PARENTS
STUDENT
ATTENDANCE OFFICER
POLICE
PLAYING HOOKEY
WHO
WHAT
PLACE TO SPEND TIME
FORGED NOTE
SCIENCE
CLASSES
MATH
ENGLISH
RESPONSE
SHOP
PUNISHMENT
HISTORY
PREVENTION

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Observations on sources of resistance within person and within institutions can be summarized in some concise principles. These are not absolute laws but are based upon generalizations which are usually true and likely to be pertinent. The recommendations which follow are organized to fit the headings of who brings the change, what kind of change succeeds, how it is best done and climate for change.

A. WHO BRINGS THE CHANGE?-Resistance will be less if:

1. Administrators, teachers, board members and community leaders feel that the project is their own, not one devised and operated by outsiders.

2. The project clearly has wholehearted support from top officials of the system.

B. WHAT KIND OF CHANGE? - Resistance will be less if:

3. Participants see the change as reducing rather than increasing their present burden(s).

4. The project is in accord with values and ideals which have long been acknowledged by participants.

5. The program offers the kind of new experience which interests participants.

6. Participants feel that their autonomy and security is not threatened.

C. PROCEDURES IN INSTITUTING CHANGE - Resistance will be less if:

7. Participants have joined in diagnostic efforts leading them to agree on what the basic problem is and to feel its importance.

8. The project is adopted by consensual group decision.

9. Proponents are able to empathize with opponents, recognize valid objections, and take steps to relieve unnecessary fears.

10. It is recognized that innovations are likely to be misunderstood and misinterpreted, and if provision is made for feedback of perceptions of the project and for further clarification as needed.

C. (continued)

11. Participants experience acceptance, support, trust and confidence in their relations with one another.

12. The project is kept open to revision and reconsideration if experience indicates that changes would be desirable.

D. CLIMATE FOR CHANGE:

13. Readiness for change gradually becomes a characteristic of certain individuals, groups, organizations and civilizations. They no longer look nostalgically at a past Golden Age but anticipate their Utopia in days to come. The spontaneity of youth is cherished an innovations are protected until they have had a chance to establish their worth. The ideal is seen more and more as possible.

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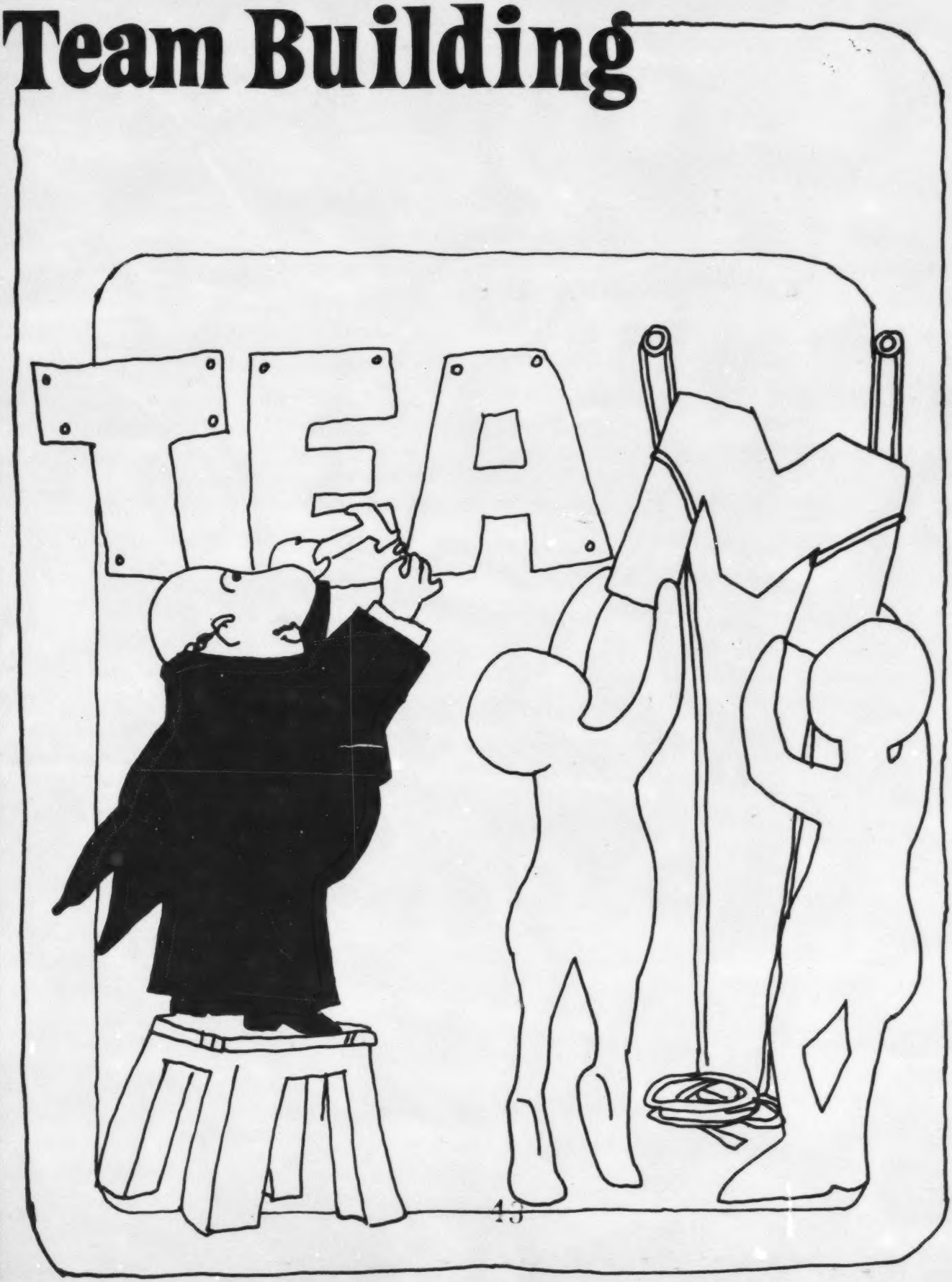
Team Building



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Module Overview

Title Team Building

Goal: Learn How To Create Teams

Sub-goal(s):
A. Understand the Rate and Function of Teams
B. Learn how to create common experiences for a potential team
C. Understand Process of Team Development

Technique(s): Lecture, Discussion, Simulation, Role Playing, and Structured Experiences

Size of Group: 5-20

Number and Length of Sessions: 1 session - 6hrs ea.
4 sessions - 2hrs ea.

Setting: Conference room with work tables

Time Analysis

Subgoals	Estimated Time Required
A	2hrs
B	1hr
C	4hrs

TEAM BUILDING

OVERVIEW

There is much being said about the value of Japanese management practices. Their style of decision making within their organizational structure is credited with being the major factor in their ability to turn out a high quality product while maintaining (or because of) high levels of employee morale.

As a result of hard economic times large labor unions have been bargaining away many of the wages and financial benefits they had achieved through adversarial negotiations in the past. In return for these concessions labor has asked for, and often received, management concessions including a sharing of decision making power. Labor is now part of the team.

In school systems many of these scripts are also being played out. Teachers and other staff members are claiming the right to be involved in decisions on how their job will be performed, what will be taught, and how the school will run. An additional factor in the school setting, not always available in the private sector, is a growing body of research evidence indicating that teacher feeling of membership in a team effort is a contributing factor in building an effective school. In addition, it is obvious that it is easier to work with your staff than against it.

Therefore, it is essential that administrators of vocational (and all other) schools understand how to build and use teams in the running of today's schools. The purpose of this module to provide practicing administrators with the skills of creating teams and of leading them to achieve worthwhile goals.

TITLE TEAM BUILDING

GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF TEAMS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to give three reasons for building teams in an organization.	1.a Make a presentation on teams emphsizing: (Exhibit 1) --better quality decisions --securing support --building trust --commitment to group goals 1.b Elicit from the group, their experiences in or with teams in any setting (ie. sports, clubs) 1.c Conduct a discussion on their reactions to team membership versus traditional individualized management situations. 1.d List differences on chalk board or newsprint. Try to include such factors as: --friendships vs collegues --common sense of purpose vs do your own thing --support vs competition --openness vs secrecy
2. Participants will be able to describe factors needed to create a team spirit.	2.a Make a presentation on factors that create team spirit and include: (EXHIBIT 2) --shared experiences --trust --openness --interdependence --group skills

Materials and Resources —

Exhibit 1 - Lecturette on value of teams
Exhibit 2 - Lecturette on factors causing team spirit

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TITLE TEAM BUILDING

GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF TEAMS

Objectives	Suggested Activities
2. (cont.)	2.b Lead a discussion on behaviors that were evidenced by teammates when they participated on successful teams. 2.c Have participants imagine the changes that would occur on the job if they could function as a team with their co-workers.

Materials and Resources —

TITLE TEAM BUILDING

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND HOW TO CREATE COMMON EXPERIENCES FOR A POTENTIAL TEAM.

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will be able to explain the concepts of the JoHari window.	1.a Make a presentation on the JoHari window including: (EXHIBIT 3) - open areas - closed areas - blind areas - unconscious areas - role of feedback 1.b Open up for questions and reactions to the concepts.
2. Participants will be able to define simulation, role playing, and structured experience.	2.a Make a presentation and define the terms in words similar to: --Simulation is a situation acted out in such a way as to represent a reality other than the one in which one is at present. --Role playing is acting out the behavior of someone else or ones own behavior under different situations. --Structured experiences are activities designed to aid participants in gaining insights in their own or others behavior. (EXHIBIT 4) 2.b Brainstorm a list of samples of each type of experience and list on board or newsprint

Materials and Resources —

Exhibit 3 - Lecturette on JoHari window
Exhibit 4 - Lecturette on Structured Experiences

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TITLE TEAM BUILDING

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Objectives	Suggested Activities
1. Participants will experience a value oriented exercise.	1.a Present participants with a list of characteristics of a "good teacher". (EXHIBIT 5) 1.b Have each member rank order the list as she see it. 1.c Divide into groups of 4 or 5 and have them reach consensus on one ranking. 1.d Combine groups and have them reach total group consensus. 1.e Debrief experience
2. Participants will experience a skill oriented exercise.	2.a Make a presentation on the skill of giving feedback. (EXHIBIT 6) 2.b Form the group into pairs of concentric circles and assign a discussion topic for the inner group to analyze. 2.c Have each member identify a task or maintainance skill they would like to work on improving. 2.d Assign each member of the outside circle to gather data on the behavior of one in the inner circle. 2.e Have the discussion go on for approximately 6 min. Ask the outer circle members to give feedback to the inner circle member they observed.

Materials and Resources —

Exhibit 5 - Characteristics of a "good teacher"
Exhibit 6 - Rules of Giving Feedback

TITLE TEAM BUILDING

GOAL: TO HELP PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Objectives	Suggested Activities
2. (cont.)	2.f. Have the inner circle members react to the feedback.
	2.g Switch circles and repeat process.
	2.h Debrief experience.
3. Participants will be able to give two reasons why sahring experiences aids team development.	3.a Elicit from group reasons why they think shared experiences contribute to team development.
	3.b Post suggestions on board.
	3.c Include: - Learning about values of others - Having common memories - Encouraging openness - Providing items for conservation - Providing opportunities for giving and receiving feedback.
4. Participants will be able to describe structured experiences that would be appropriate for team building.	4.a Review experiences dealing with values --Agreeing on characteristics of a good teacher --Reaching consensus on goals --Proud whip --Values voting
	4.b Review experiences dealing with skill development --Force Field Analysis --Task and Maintainance behaviors --Problem solving
	4.c Review listings in the bibliography that contain structured experiences.

Materials and Resources —

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LECTURETTE ON VALUE OF TEAMS

This country often extolls the myth of the rugged individual. Stories of the old west regularly tell of the lone gun fighter or mountain man who withstood seemingly impossible odds to survive or achieve personal goals. The truth of the matter is that such individuals, if they ever existed at all, were very few and far between. They did little or nothing to advance civilization or society. They only cared about their own needs and interests. The west and most of our country was settled, populated and made great by groups of people, working in teams. It was only when many people cooperated that the major, important tasks could be completed. The barn raising, farming, harvesting, and hunting could only be done when everybody worked together towards a common goal.

Research done more recently supports the value of team efforts. NASA has found that team planning is superior to individual efforts. Athletic groups made up of individual stars lose in competition with teams made up of skillful players who work as a team. Individuals who are members of effective terms experience high level of trust, provide each other with strong support and tend to have a more positive outlook on life than do others who work alone.

Decisions made by individuals can only be based on the experience and resources of one person. Decisions made by teams can draw on a wide range of diverse experiences and build on multiple and varied resources. Repeated research by psychologists and sociologists confirm that the quality of decisions made by teams are superior to those of all but the most rare individuals.

Teams are not the answer to all the world's problems, but they do offer a better chance for finding answers over the long haul.

LECTURETTE ON FACTORS CAUSING TEAM SPIRIT

Just because two or more persons are in the same place at the same time, does not mean that they constitute a team. Even if they are there for the same purpose or express a common goal, it does not mean that they will function as a team. Many times people who have worked together for a long time and accomplished many tasks lack the spirit needed to make for a winning team.

To create a team from a group of individuals required careful planning. A effective team exists when the participants accept responsibility for each other, when they all feel a sense of ownership in the group goals,and when they get as much satisfaction from team achievement as from team membership. It does not mean that the individual must lose all sense of separate worth, that the group must mean more than self, but it does mean that membership in the team is important. Effective team members have strong interpersonal skills that allow them to share thoughts with each other, accept each other as who they are, and are able and willing to depend on each other.

How does a group of individuals, with their own agendas, come together to form a team, a team with spirit? The process depends on a number of factors. There must be shared experiences. The members must have had opportunities to test each other out. They have to have had a chance to see each other without defenses, behave under different conditions, and see how much trust each person can be given. They have to find out if the other members can accept them as they are, expose themselves and not be hurt. They must be able to be open about their ideas and values and not feel vulnerable.

All these factors have to be present. However even then no one can be sure that the team will function well and with spirit. The final factor or test of an effective team is the way the deal with their own problems. An effective team will look at itself with the same objective problem solving approach they use for any other issue. It will accept the problem of group existence as real and important. When faced with an internal crisis they will face it directly and recognize that they collectively are as important as they are individually. Remember that a team is an entity in itself as are the individual members. A team is greater than the sum of its parts. If one of the members has a problem, the others care enough to help. If the team has a problem they all have to care enough to help.

LECTURETTE ON THE JOHARI WINDOW

When a group of people share a common experience they learn something about how each other thinks, feels and acts under certain conditions. This happens whether or not someone plans for it to happen. However, if someone does plan for the experience to result in increased insight into each of the members as members, then there must be some understanding of how this process works.

Two psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram, developed what they called the JOHARI Window, to explain how we learn about others and ourselves in group settings. Imagine a window with four equal sized panes. (see diagram below)

KNOWN TO OTHERS

KNOWN TO SELF		
	OPEN	BLIND
	HIDDEN	UNCONSCIOUS

The upper left hand area is called "open" because it represents dimensions of our behavior that is both known to others and known to ourselves. The lower left area is called "hidden" because we know this about ourselves but others do not know about it. The upper right hand area is called "blind" because others know about it but we are not aware of it. The lower right area is called "unconscious" because we do not know about it or are not aware of it, but then neither does anyone else know anything about it.

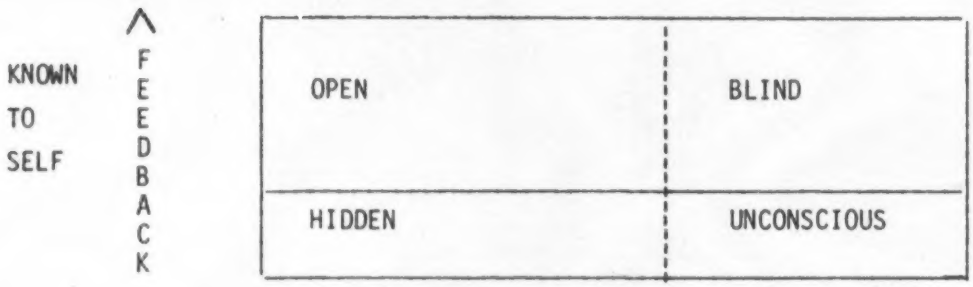
Labeling the areas this way helps us identify factors that affect communication within a group. We can see areas that improve understanding as well as areas that make communication difficult. It seems logical that we would want a large open area if we expect the communication within a group to be open. After all the more we are willing to talk about and the more we realize others know about us the less guarded we have to be about what we say. The major issue is then just how can we enlarge our "open" area and reduce the "hidden" and "blind" sectors?

The Answer Is Called FEEDBACK

Feedback is a term used to describe the providing of information back to the source. The work was originally used to deal with the electronic impulses given off by a sound system that was picked up by the microphone, creating a high pitched squeal. The impulses given off at the end were fed back into the beginning of the system. The term is most often heard these days in relation to space shots where it is used to describe the collecting of data on the course of the rocket and the use of that data to make mid-course corrections in the flight path.

In the context of group interaction and improved communication is is used to describe the process of sharing "hidden" information with the group and having the group share "blind" information on how they perceive you as a group member.

KNOWN TO OTHERS



The feedback from you to the group reduces your hidden area and the feedback from the group to you reduces your blind area and, in both cases, your open area increases.

LECTURETTE ON STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES

If you remember what I said before about the factors that contribute to creating effective teams, I stressed the importance of shared experiences. These experiences must provide a wide range of opportunities for each team member to learn about each other, how much each can be trusted, what each one brings to the group, how each personality meshes with the others and how each member can be expected to behave under various conditions. It is not always possible to expect these experiences to happen by chance. If the team waits long enough and has many opportunities to function under different conditions they may occur. However, a team rarely has enough time to afford the luxury of waiting until enough opportunities come along. In addition, most teams are formed for a specific purpose and time frame yet they must work together as if they had gone through enough to be a team.

When a group of individuals are brought together to function as a team for a specific purpose or time that is important enough efforts must be taken to increase the likelihood that they will work as a team. To accomplish this the organizer or convener must carefully plan a series of experiences that will enable them to become a team. These experiences must be designed to insure that they include opportunities for the members to learn as much as possible about each other in the shortest possible time. The strategies can include such activities as role playing and simulations and other experiences carefully structured to teach specific lessons about each other or about the task at hand. When put together in a logical and development sequence the total effect is to shorten the time needed to learn about each other and form a team.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER

This list is just one person's collection of what peers and colleagues have said make up an effective teacher. No claim is made for a valid research base or for a theoretical position. It is offered just as an exercise for group discussion on the relative value of various teacher characteristics. Examine the list and add any factors you think should be included. Then rank order the items in order of the importance you think each should have in the makeup of an effective teacher.

Can plan lessons well

Can lecture well

Follows rules and regulations

Conducts good discussions

Functions as a team member

Is creative

Likes to work with children

Has a sense of humor

Knows subject matter

Is a good role model

Is organized

Maintains effective discipline

Supports administration

Uses test data

Has clear goals

Is flexible

Has strong self concept

Listens to students

RULES OF GIVING FEEDBACK

"Feedback" is a way of helping another person consider changing her/his behavior. It is communication that given another person, or a group, information about how she/he or it affects others. As in a guided missile system, feedback helps individuals keep their behavior "on target" and thus better achieve their goals.

Some Criteria For Useful Feedback:

1. It is descriptive rather than evaluative. Describing your own reactions leaves the other person free to use or not use the feedback. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for other person to react defensively.

2. It is specific rather than general. Telling someone she/he is dominating is not as useful as telling her/him, "Just now when we were deciding the issue, you seemed inattentive to what others were saying, and I felt forced to accept your arguments or face your anger."

3. It takes into account both your needs and the needs of the other person. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only your own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person on the receiving end.

4. It is directed towards behavior which the receiver can do something about. Frustration is only increased when you remind a person of some shortcoming over which her/himself has no control.

5. It is solicited rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver her/himself has formulated the kind of question which you can answer.

6. It is well timed. In general, feedback is most useful immediately after the given behavior has occurred (depending of course, on the person's readiness to listen, on the support available from others, etc.)

7. It is checked for clarity. One way of doing this is to have the receiver try to rephrase the feedback she/he received to see if it corresponds to what you had in mind.

Feedback, then, is a way of giving help; it is a corrective mechanism for the individual who wants to learn how well her/his behavior matches her/his intentions

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